

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTONJR:MAR

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY (PERSECTO 17713)

S/S:MR. BORG

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 095617

NODIS

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, US, SY, LE

SUBJECT: FAHMY'S REACTION TO SECRETARY'S LAST MESSAGE ON  
LEBANON

REF: CAIRO 5273

1. PLEASE INFORM FAHMY THAT I HAVE READ CAREFULLY THE  
REPORT OF YOUR MONDAY CONVERSATION WITH HIM WHEN YOU  
DELIVERED MY LATEST MESSAGE ON LEBANESE SITUATION. I  
WILL PLAN TO SEND OUR FULLER ANALYSIS TO YOU FOR SADAT  
AND FAHMY ON WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING MY RETURN TO WASHINGTON  
FROM CALIFORNIA. MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, I WOULD LIKE TO  
CONVEY A FEW PRELIMINARY REACTIONS TO HIS COMMENTS TO YOU,  
SINCE I AM CONCERNED THAT WE DO NOT SEEM TO BE GETTING  
THROUGH TO HIM.

2. ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT WE HAD GIVEN SYRIA A  
"GREEN LIGHT" ON LIMITED SYRIAN INTERVENTION, THE SEQUENCE  
OF EVENTS WAS THE REVERSE OF THE WAY FAHMY DESCRIBES THEM.  
WHEN THE SYRIANS APPROACHED US THROUGH THE FRENCH AND KING

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HUSSEIN ABOUT THEIR DESIRE TO INTERVENE MILITARILY, IT WAS

CLEAR THAT THEY ALREADY HAD FORCES IN LEBANON UNDER THEIR CONTROL WHICH WERE ABOUT AT THE LIMIT OF WHAT WE JUDGED

WOULD TRIGGER AN ISRAELI REACTION. AS WE INFORMED FAHMY AT THE TIME (STATE 74949), WE INFORMED THE SYRIANS BOTH DIRECTLY AND THROUGH THE FRENCH THAT IN OUR VIEW ISRAEL WOULD MOVE IF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIAN FORCES IN LEBANON, INCLUDING THOSE ALREADY THERE AND EVEN THOUGH MIXED WITH LOCAL OR OTHER (E.G., PALESTINIAN) NON-SYRIAN FORCES, EXCEEDED A BRIGADE IN SIZE OR IF THEY WERE TO EMPLOY HEAVY WEAPONS. SINCE WE ESTIMATED THAT THE SYRIANS HAD ALREADY NEARLY A BRIGADE IN LEBANON, THIS WAS CLEARLY MEANT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT FURTHER MOVEMENT WOULD RUN HIGH RISK OF ISRAELI REACTION. IT WAS DESIGNED TO BE A "RED LIGHT" NOT A GREEN LIGHT FOR FURTHER SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION.

3. SO FAR AS OUR "ARRANGING" LIMITS OF SYRIAN INTERVENTION WITH ISRAELIS IS CONCERNED, YOU SHOULD TELL FAHMY THAT ASAD HAS NOT RECEIVED MURPHY SINCE THEIR MEETING IMMEDIATELY AFTER LATTER'S RETURN TO DAMASCUS. OUR LATEST COMMUNICATION FROM ASAD, PASSED TO MURPHY INDIRECTLY, WAS TO REJECT AS AN "ULTIMATUM" THE WARNING WE CONVEYED AT THE END OF LAST WEEK CONCERNING THE SYRIAN FORCES SENT INTO LEBANON. THIS WARNING WAS NOT BASED ON ANY PRECISE DEFINITION OF THEIR LIMITS GIVEN US BY THE ISRAELIS, SINCE THEY HAVE NOT RPT NOT DONE SO, BUT ON OUR BEST JUDGMENT OF WHAT THE REALITIES ARE.

4. THE FACT THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE NOT REACTED TO SYRIAN INTERVENTION TO DATE, WHEN THEY HAVE REACTED TO MUCH LESS IN THE PAST, IS LARGELY THE RESULT OF OUR HAVING PERSUADED THEM THAT THEIR INTERVENTION NOW WOULD ONLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE AND INCREASE, RATHER THAN DIMINISH, THE RISK OF RENEWED HOSTILITIES.

5. WITH RESPECT TO FAHMY'S DESIRE FOR A FULLER REPORT ON OUR TALKS WITH HUSSEIN AND ZAID RIFAI, WE HAVE ALREADY CONVEYED THE MAIN SUBSTANCE WITH REGARD TO LEBANON (STATE 77803) WHICH WAS THE DOMINANT SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION DURING HUSSEIN'S VISIT, AND WITH REGARD TO OUR DIS-

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CUSSIONS WITH HUSSEIN OF THE NON-BELLIGERENCY CONCEPT (STATE 88411). HUSSEIN AND RIFAI MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY CONSIDER THEMSELVES BOUND BY THE RABAT SUMMIT DECISION. WITH RESPECT TO UNDOF RENEWAL, IT WAS HUSSEIN'S VIEW THAT ASAD WILL NOT RPT NOT AGREE TO A RENEWAL IN MAY UNLESS HE CAN GET A SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL PRICE -- E.G., LINKAGE TO A RESOLUTION OF THE KIND WE VETOED IN JANUARY. WE MADE CLEAR TO HUSSEIN THAT THIS WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION BUT, AS

INDICATED IN MY LAST MESSAGE, WE HAVE HAD NO DISCUSSIONS  
DIRECTLY WITH ASAD ABOUT UNDOF RENEWAL QUESTIONS. AS  
FOR US, WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF PAYING ANY PRICE FOR  
RENEWAL.

6. FINALLY, PLEASE TELL FAHMY I WILL BE IN FURTHER TOUCH  
WITH HIM SHORTLY AND MEANWHILE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY VIEWS  
PRESIDENT SADAT AND HE MAY WANT TO CONVEY IN RESPONSE TO  
THE QUESTIONS I POSED IN MY LAST MESSAGE. ROBINSON

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